

Appl. No. 09/708,492

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-31 and 33-48 are pending in the application. By this Amendment claims 47 and 48 are added. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the helpful comments set forth in the Office Action, such as on pages 11 and 12 in the "Remarks" section. Applicant requests reconsideration based on the comments set forth below and the above amendments.

No new matter has been added by this Amendment. Support for the amendments to the claims may be found on page 10 of the application, for example.

**A. The Claim Rejections based on Dai, Moore and Buyukkoc**

The Office Action asserts that claims 11-15, 17, 19, 30-34, 36, 38-39 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable by U.S. Patent No. 5,781,549 by Dai in view of U.S. Patent No 5,287,461 by Moore. Further, claims 1-5, 7, 9-10, 22-24, 26, 28-29, 40-42, and 44-46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable by U.S. Patent No. 5,781,549 by Dai in view of U.S. Patent No 5,287,461 by Moore in further view of U.S. Patent No 6,189,043 by Buyukkoc et al. The above art rejections are addressed below collectively.

In helpful clarification of the pending rejection, the Examiner provides comments on page 12. That is, the Examiner asserts that the Dai reference does teach the limitations as claimed, and that Applicant has amended claims to explicitly state an active request component in the interrogate stage. The Examiner comments this is addressed with the new reference Buyukkoc. The Examiner asserts that in the claims still without the amendment, Dai still teaches a controller which monitors traffic over the network; and that interrogating without detail is interpreted as monitoring and the prior art meets the breadth of the limitation.

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Applicant respectfully traverses the above assertions and the proposed combination of Buyukkoc with the teachings of Dai and Moore. Applicant submits that the proposed combination of Buyukkoc with Dai and Moore under 35 U.S.C. §103 is unsupported by the applied art and fails to teach the claimed invention.

Claim 1 recites a multiple port unit adapted for coupling one or more computers to multiple peripheral devices over a network, said multiple port unit comprising, plural network ports, each of said network ports being configured to couple the multiple port unit to a computer over a respective network link; plural communication serial ports, each of said communication serial ports being configured to couple the multiple port unit to a peripheral device; and a control unit configured to interrogate the network links and to communicatively couple said communication serial ports to a selected one of said network ports based on the interrogation of the network links. Claim 1 has been previously further amended to recite "the control unit being further configured to determine whether it is time to interrogate the network links."

The teachings of Dai were discussed in the prior Amendment. As described in the Abstract of Dai, Dai is directed to a method and apparatus for switching data packets in a data network, that includes "a local area network switch which implements packet segmentation and reassembly for cell-based switching on a backplane cell bus. A plurality of packet processing units are each coupled to a backplane cell bus wherein each packet processing unit hosts a plurality of local area network ports. Each packet processing unit is associated with a single packet buffer memory that is shared by the ports associated with the packet processing unit. Dai teaches the segmentation of local area network packets into fixed-size cells facilitates an efficient local area network switch which provides dedicated bandwidth for each of the ports associated with the switch.

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Claim 1 recites among other features, *a control unit configured to interrogate the network links and to communicatively couple said communication serial ports to a selected one of said network ports based on the interrogation of the network links*. Claim 1 further recites *the control unit being configured to determine whether it is time to interrogate the network links*. Based on at least the reasons set forth herein Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection set forth in the

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